

**United States Department of the Interior
Bureau of Land Management**

**Environmental Assessment
DOI-BLM-UT-Y010-2015-0222**

**Tusher Canyon Upland Game Guzzlers
September 2015**

Location: T. 20 S., R. 17 E., Sections. 7 and 10

Applicant/Address:
BLM – Moab Field Office

U.S. Department of the Interior
Bureau of Land Management
Moab Field Office
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Moab, Utah 84532
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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION AND NEED FOR THE PROPOSED ACTION

INTRODUCTION

The Bureau of Land Management (BLM), Moab Field Office, in cooperation with Utah Division of Wildlife Resources (UDWR), proposes to install two rainfall catchment water developments (guzzlers) designed for upland game birds (e.g. blue grouse and chukar partridge) use on public lands. These lands are located in Tusher Canyon, approximately five miles northeast of the Green River and are accessible by vehicle. The water developments would be located at two different locations in Tusher Canyon at T. 20 S., R. 17 E., sec. 07, S½. and T. 20 S., R. 17 E., sec. 10, N½ (See map below). If approved, UDWR would provide the needed labor (volunteers and UDWR employees), 350 gallon tanks, plumbing materials, and materials for rain catchment apron, to install the guzzlers. All installation would be completed by hand or with an excavator. The guzzlers would be installed during winter/spring of 2015-2016.

NEED FOR THE PROPOSED ACTION

Need: Water can be a limiting factor for upland game birds such as blue grouse and chukar partridge and other local wildlife. Historic water sources in Tusher canyon have dried up from drought or other possibly human related causes. Upland game populations seem to have been affected by the loss of water.

Purpose: The purpose of the Purposed Action is to increase the available water and provide a consistent source of water for upland game and other wildlife in the area when other sources have disappeared or diminished due to drought or human related other factors.

CONFORMANCE WITH BLM LAND USE PLAN(S) The proposed action is in conformance with the applicable Land Use Plan (LUP): Moab Field Office RMP approved October 31, 2008.

This proposed action and alternatives are in conformance with the terms and conditions of the Moab Field Office Management Plan approved October 2008 (Plan) as required by 43 CFR 1610.5. This is shown on page 138 of the Plan and reads as follows:

Maintain, protect and enhance habitats to support natural wildlife diversity, reproductive capability, and a healthy, self-sustaining population of wildlife and fish species.

RELATIONSHIPS TO STATUTES, REGULATIONS AND OTHER PLANS

The proposed action and alternative(s) are consistent with federal, state, and local laws, regulations and plans.

The proposed action and alternatives support Policy 7 of the Grand County General Plan of 1996: Build a Strong Economy by enhancing Grand County's quality of community life and scenic assets, "...protecting the natural assets that form the basis for the local economy, good design, and diversification."

The Federal Land Policy and Management Act (FLPMA) of 1976 (43 U.S.C. 1701 et seq.: 90 Stat 2743; P.L. 94-579) directs that the public lands be managed in a manner that will provide food and habitat for fish and wildlife, Section 102 (a) (b). Section 401(b) authorizes the use of 'Range Betterment' for the protection, maintenance, rehabilitation, improvement, and management of wildlife habitat.

The Sikes Act of 1960 (16U.S.C. 680a-f; Stat. 1052, as amended, P.L. 93-452 and 88 Stat. 1069 (1974), P.L. 95-420 and 92 Stat. 921 (1978), as amended, provide for the conservation, restoration, and management of species and their

habitat in cooperation with State Wildlife Agencies, including implementation of on-the-ground wildlife habitat improvement, maintenance, and protection programs.

CHAPTER 2

DESCRIPTION OF ALTERNATIVES

INTRODUCTION

This Environmental Assessment (EA) has been prepared to analyze the installation of two rainfall catchments (guzzlers) on public lands within Tusher Canyon. The EA is a site-specific analysis of potential impacts that could result in the implementation of the proposed action or alternatives to the proposed action.

The No Action alternative is considered and analyzed to provide a baseline for comparison of the impacts of the proposed action. No potential impacts have been identified therefore there are no issues to resolve through additional mitigation or other action alternatives.

The EA assists the BLM in project planning and ensures compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), and in making a determination as to whether any "significant" impacts could result from the analyzed actions. "Significance" is defined by NEPA and is found in regulation 40 CFR 1508.27. An EA provides evidence for determining whether to prepare an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) or a statement of "Finding of No Significant Impact" (FONSI). A Decision Record (DR), which includes a FONSI statement, is a document that briefly presents the reasons why implementation of the proposed action will not result in "significant" environmental impacts (effects) beyond those already addressed in the Moab Field Office RMP, approved October 31, 2008.

If the decision maker determines that this project has "significant" impacts following the analysis in the EA, then an EIS would be prepared for the project. If not, a Decision Record (DR) may be signed for the EA approving the alternative selected.

PROPOSED ACTION

The BLM, Moab Field Office, in cooperation with the UDWR, proposes to install two water development structures (i.e. guzzlers) designed for upland game bird use and other wildlife on public lands in Tusher Canyon. The guzzlers would be located approximately twelve miles northeast of Green River, UT. One guzzler will be located within the canyon bottom at T. 20 S. R. 17 E., sec 07, S½. The other guzzler will be located near the top of the canyon at the base of the mountain T. 20 S. R. 17 E., sec 10, N½. If approved, UDWR would provide the needed labor, tank, and plumbing materials to install the water developments. The guzzler would be installed during the winter/spring of 2015-2016. Installation will require a crew of UDWR employees and an excavator to dig and construct the guzzlers.

The water development would consist of a partially buried 350 gallon catchment tank 5'X5'X2' in size, plumbing, and a 9'X12' metal apron to catch rainwater, and a fence around the guzzler to protect it from livestock.

All materials would be delivered by truck to the site using existing roads; no new route would be created. An excavator will be driven from the nearest road to the exact site. No road will need to be constructed. The excavator and hand crews will dig a hole for the tank approximately 6 feet long, 6 feet wide, and 3 feet deep. Eight additional holes approximately 3 feet deep and 1 foot in circumference will be dug to place supporting posts for the apron. These supporting posts will be placed on the edges of the apron in a rectangular position 9'X12' in size. The apron will be constructed of metal roofing and metal poles. The water that runs off of the apron will be plumbed down into the tank.

Once installation is complete, the area disturbed would be seeded with a seed mix developed to maximize restoration. The site would be re-seeded if needed and sprayed with herbicide as needed, to ensure rapid vegetative cover is established to reduce wind erosion and dust and to control weed invasions. Seeding would be conducted by the

APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

INTERDISCIPLINARY TEAM CHECKLIST

Project Title: Tusher Canyon Upland Game Guzzlers

NEPA Log Number: DOI-BLM- UT-Y010-2015-0222

Project Leader: Pam Riddle

DETERMINATION OF STAFF: *(Choose one of the following abbreviated options for the left column)*

NP = not present in the area impacted by the proposed or alternative actions

NI = present, but not affected to a degree that detailed analysis is required

PI = present with potential for relevant impact that need to be analyzed in detail in the EA

NC = (DNAs only) actions and impacts not changed from those disclosed in the existing NEPA documents cited in Section D of the DNA form. The Rationale column may include NI and NP discussions.

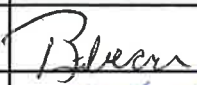

The following elements are not present in the Moab Field Office and have been removed from the checklist: Farmlands (Prime orUnique), Wild Horses and Burros.

Determina- tion	Resource	Rationale for Determination*	Specialist	Date	Initials
RESOURCES AND ISSUES CONSIDERED (INCLUDES SUPPLEMENTAL AUTHORITIES APPENDIX 1 H-1790-1)					
NI	Air Quality Greenhouse Gas Emissions	This project will not impact air quality resources; minimal surface disturbance.	Ann Marie Aubry	9/1/15	<i>AnnA</i>
NI	Floodplains	No Floodplain is project area.	Ann Marie Aubry	9/1/15	<i>AnnA</i>
NI	Soils	Mitigation is part of the project proposal (minimize surface disturbances), minimal vehicle traffic, leads to very minimal impacts over short term	Ann Marie Aubry	9/1/15	<i>AnnA</i>
NP	Water Resources/Quality (drinking/surface/ground)		Ann Marie Aubry	9/1/15	<i>AnnA</i>
NP	Wetlands/Riparian Zones		Ann Marie Aubry	9/1/15	<i>AnnA</i>
NP	Areas of Critical Environmental Concern	See 2008 RMP	Katie Stevens	9/1/15	<i>KS</i>
NI	Recreation	Very little recreational use	Katie Stevens	9/1/15	<i>KS</i>
NP	Wild and Scenic Rivers		Katie Stevens	9/1/15	<i>KS</i>
NI	Visual Resources	Color contrast to be mitigated	Katie Stevens	9/1/15	<i>KS</i>
NP	BLM Natural Areas		Bill Stevens	9/1/15	<i>BS</i>

Determination	Resource	Rationale for Determination*	Specialist	Date	Initials
NI	Socio-Economics		Bill Stevens <i>BS</i>	9/1/15	<i>BS</i>
NP	Wilderness/WSA		Bill Stevens <i>BS</i>	9/1/15	<i>BS</i>
PI	Wilderness Characteristics	Small, short term impact on naturalness, guzzler located near road on south side of road and in a small drainage that obscures it from view – The area is not managed for Wilderness Characteristics	Bill Stevens <i>BS</i>	9/1/15	<i>BS</i>
NP	Cultural Resources	DWR archaeologist conducted a literature search and a Class III archaeological inventory of the project area. The BLM found no properties eligible to the National Register of Historic Places. The BLM, therefore, made a determination of No Historic Properties Affected. Details of these finds are discussed in the Cultural Resource Inventory Report (U-15-UQ-0379). BLM will consult with the Utah SHPO in accordance with the threshold procedures for small projects specified in the Utah BLM/Utah SHPO Statewide Small Scale Undertakings Programmatic Agreement.	M. Jared Lundell	9/9/15	mjl
NP	Native American Religious Concerns	No known sites of religious or cultural significance to Native American tribes are within the project area.	M. Jared Lundell	9/9/15	mjl
NI	Visual Resources	Color contrast to be mitigated	Katie Stevens	9/14/15	
NP	Wastes (hazardous or solid)		David Pals	9/2/15	dwp
NP	Threatened, Endangered or Candidate Animal Species		Pam Riddle	9/1/15	<i>PR</i>
NI	Migratory Birds	All activities will occur outside of the migratory bird and raptor nesting season therefore no nesting birds and raptors will not be impacted. Minimal localized displacement of non-nesting birds and raptors may occur.	Pam Riddle	9/1/15	<i>PR</i>
NP	Utah BLM Sensitive Species		Pam Riddle	9/1/15	<i>PR</i>
PI	Fish and Wildlife Excluding USFW Designated Species		Pam Riddle	9/1/15	<i>PR</i>
NP	Threatened, Endangered or Candidate Plant Species		David Williams	9/1/15	<i>DW</i>
NI	Livestock Grazing	This project is very small, less the 0.01 acres, supplies will be delivered by vehicle along an existing road, no substantial increase in wildlife use that will impact grazing resources is expected to occur, and therefore livestock grazing will not be impacted to a degree for analysis	David Williams	9/1/15	<i>DW</i>
NI	Rangeland Health Standards	This project is very small, less than 0.01 acres, supplies will be delivered by vehicle along an existing road, no substantial increase in wildlife use that will impact grazing resources is expected to occur, and therefore livestock grazing will not be impacted to a degree for	David Williams	9/1/15	<i>DW</i>

Determination	Resource	Rationale for Determination*	Specialist	Date	Initials
		analysis			
NI	Invasive Species/Noxious Weeds	Current site has minimal occurrence of invasive species. The site would be sprayed with herbicide annually, if needed, to ensure weed invasions is controlled. Mitigation measures adequately address invasive species/noxious weeds, therefore these resources will not be impacted to a degree for analysis.	David Williams	9/1/15	DW
NI	Vegetation Excluding USFW Designated Species	This project is very small, less the 0.01 acres, supplies will be delivered by vehicle along an existing road, no substantial increase in wildlife use that will impact vegetative resources is expected to occur, and therefore vegetation will not be impacted to a degree for analysis.	David Williams	9/1/15	DW
NI	Woodland / Forestry	No woodland plants (pinyon/juniper) would be removed therefore the resource will not be impacted to a degree for analysis.	David Williams	9/1/15	DW
NI	Fuels/Fire Management	This project is very small & all supplies will be delivered by vehicle from the road. Fire/fuels will not be impacted to a degree for analysis.	Josh Relph	9/16/15	JR
NP	Geology / Mineral Resources/Energy Production		David Pals	9/2/15	dwp
NI	Lands/Access	No conflicts with lands authorization	Jan Denny	9/10/15	JD
NI	Paleontology	Mancos Formation. Vertebrate fossils not likely, but if encountered, stop work and contact district paleontologist.	R. Hunt-Foster	9/2/2015	RKHF

FINAL REVIEW:

Reviewer Title	Signature	Date	Comments
Environmental Coordinator		9/15/2015	
Authorized Officer		9/16/15	

UDWR. We will also build a fence around the perimeter of the guzzler to keep livestock from destroying the guzzler and drinking the water.

The development would be maintained periodically by the BLM, UDWR, and the UDWR's dedicated hunter program. This would ensure that the catchment is kept functional and that the investment in this wildlife habitat project retains long-term effectiveness. All access would be on foot and would be limited to authorized personnel inspecting and maintaining the guzzler.

A BLM right-of-way will be issued on both guzzler locations.



NO ACTION

Under the no-action alternative, a water guzzler would not be constructed within upland game habitat in Tusher Canyon.

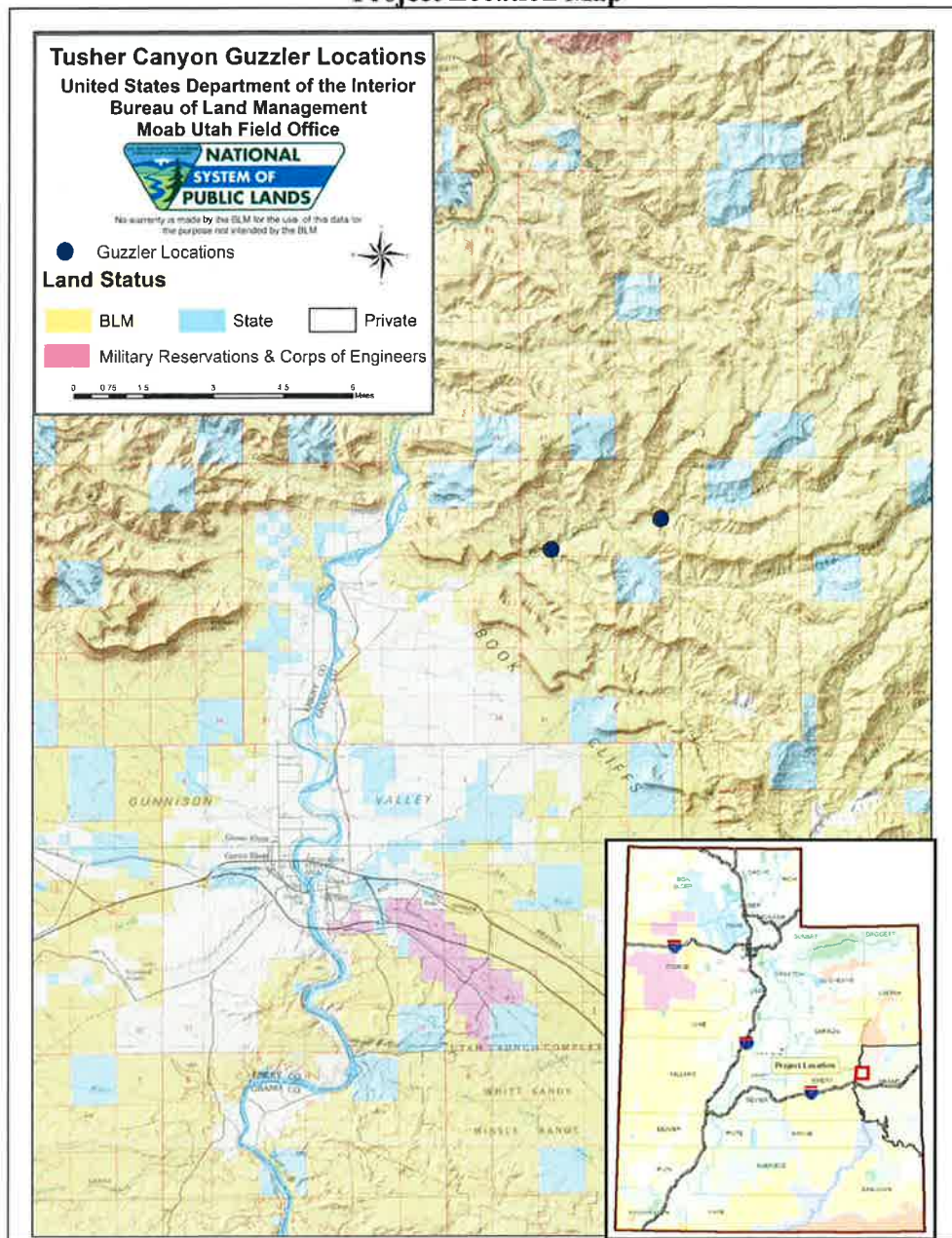
CHAPTER 3

AFFECTED ENVIRONMENT

INTRODUCTION AND GENERAL SETTING

The affected environment was considered and analyzed by an interdisciplinary team as documented in the Interdisciplinary Team Checklist. The checklist indicates which resources of concern are either not present in the project area or would not be impacted to a degree that requires detailed analysis, see Appendix A. Resources which could be impacted to a level requiring further analysis are described in Chapter 3 and impacts on these resources are analyzed in Chapter 4 below.

Project Location Map



The project sites are located approximately 12 miles northeast of the Green River in remote Tusher Canyon (see Map below). The bottom of Tusher Canyon has a county road that follows up it all the way to the top and exits on top of the plateau. The average annual precipitation is 5-8 inches with the majority occurring as rainfall during the monsoon season, July through September. The canyon contains very steep canyon walls and ledges with deep, loamy soils on the benches, washes and canyon bottom and is largely desert terrain. Vegetation is generally sparse desert shrub, consisting primarily of sagebrush and shadscale species, and Indian ricegrass and galleta grass species. The general topography of the area above Tusher Canyon is characterized by gently rolling low gradient hills and steep, rocky mountains. The proposed sites are located in the canyon bottom and on top out of the canyon bottom at the base of a mountain where upland game birds, chukars and other small mammals will be able to have good escape routes up the canyon wall and the mountain side.

Wildlife

This area contains a diverse population of wildlife, depending on the season and the availability of forage and water. Species include chukar partridge, blue grouse, Rocky Mountain bighorn sheep, mule deer, coyotes, mountain lions, black bear, badgers, rabbits, kit fox, prairie dogs and other small mammals, golden eagles, ferruginous hawks, burrowing owl, red-tailed hawks, turkey vultures, ravens and other large raptors, migratory and desert bird species and various reptile species.

Wilderness Characteristics

The most eastern guzzler is located within lands that were surveyed in the 1999 Utah Wilderness Inventory and were determined by the BLM to have wilderness characteristics. The BLM also inventoried and evaluated additional areas for wilderness characteristics as part of the 2008 RMP process. The evaluation process is documented in Appendix K of the October 2008 Moab Field Office Resource Management Plan (BLM, 2008). In the Resource Management Plan, these lands were not selected to protect, maintain or preserve their wilderness characteristics.

CHAPTER 4

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS**DIRECT AND INDIRECT IMPACTS****PROPOSED ACTION**

This section analyzes the impacts of the proposed action to those resources described in the affected environment section 3, above.

Wildlife

Guzzlers got their start primarily in the late 1940s when sportsmen and game departments developed man made water sources to mitigate for the loss of water to cities and agriculture. Providing continued water during periods of drought has been found to facilitate breeding populations of game birds and other birds and mammals in arid parts of the country.

Utah is the second driest state in the United States. Intuitively, it is thought that improved water resource development will improve habitat for local wildlife populations and expand habitat opportunity for upland game birds and chukars, resulting in increased populations in areas where the lack of persistent water sources has suppressed populations. Installation of top guzzlers in Tusher Canyon will ensure water is consistently available to upland game birds and other wildlife. Where access to water is a limiting factor these guzzlers can stabilize and increase the distribution and abundance of many species of wildlife.

Wilderness Characteristics

For one or two days visitors may have a temporary loss of outstanding opportunities for solitude or for primitive and unconfined recreation during project activities, but this would be a short term episode in an isolated area less than .5 acres. There are still vast expanses of areas that would remain undisturbed and offer solitude or opportunities for primitive and unconfined recreation in adjacent areas. The guzzler is located near road on south side and in a small drainage that obscures it from view. Additionally this area is not managed for Wilderness Characteristics.

NO ACTION**Wildlife**

The No Action alternative would not meet the need for the development of water sources for upland game birds and other wildlife species. Without the proposed water developments, water sources would continue to be limited.

During summer months and periods of drought, when water sources become scarce, breeding populations of game birds and other birds and mammals would not benefit from year round water. There would be no environmental impacts from the proposed action because it would be denied.

CUMULATIVE IMPACTS

Cumulative impacts are those impacts resulting from the incremental impact of an action when added to other past, present, or reasonably foreseeable actions regardless of what agency or person undertakes such actions.

Wildlife

The cumulative impact area of analysis for wildlife is Tusher Canyon because most of the wildlife that will benefit from the two guzzlers will also use Tusher Canyon to forage and seek water. The timeframe for analysis of the cumulative impacts wildlife is 30 years because this is the expected life of the water development system. Past, present and reasonably foreseeable actions ongoing in the cumulative impact area for wildlife include the development and maintenance of the county road and livestock grazing in the area. The cumulative effects to wildlife from past, present, and reasonably foreseeable actions include short term displacement along the county road from maintenance and use of the road and cattle in the area. The proposed action will contribute additional water availability, ultimately improving habitat for upland game including chukars and other local wildlife. The No Action alternative will not result in an accumulation of effects to upland game, chukars or other wildlife.

Wilderness Characteristics

The cumulative impact area of analysis for Wilderness Characteristics is the area between Left-hand and Right-hand and Tusher Canyon because these lands were determined by the BLM to have wilderness characteristics but not selected to protect, maintain or preserve their wilderness characteristics. The timeframe for analysis of the cumulative impacts wildlife is 30 years because this is the expected life of the water development system. Past, present and reasonably foreseeable actions ongoing in the cumulative impact area for Wilderness Characteristics include the development and maintenance of the county road and livestock grazing in the area. The cumulative effects to wildlife from past, present, and reasonably foreseeable actions include decreased outstanding opportunities for solitude or for primitive and unconfined recreation. The proposed action will contribute additional water availability, ultimately improving habitat for upland game including chukars and other local wildlife that could result in the long term, enhancement wildlife populations, further maintaining and possibly expanding opportunities for primitive and unconfined recreation opportunities, including wildlife viewing, hunting, and natural history study.

The No Action alternative will not result in an accumulation of effects to Wilderness Characteristics upland game, chukars or other wildlife.

CHAPTER 5

PERSONS, GROUPS, AND AGENCIES CONSULTED

During preparation of the EA, the public was notified of the proposed action by posting on BLM e-planning August 13, 2015. No comments or inquiries have been received by the BLM in response to the notice. A public comment period was not offered because no interest in the proposal has been expressed.

Table 5.1. List of Persons, Agencies and Organizations Consulted

Name	Purpose & Authorities for Consultation or Coordination	Findings & Conclusions
Robert Edgel - UDWR	Placement and construction of two guzzlers	Final guzzler locations
Kevin Denny - UDWR/BLM	Placement and construction of two guzzlers	Final guzzler locations

List of Preparers

Table 5.2. List of Preparers

Name	Title	Critical Element(s), Other Resources
Pam Riddle	Wildlife Biologist	Project Leader- Wildlife, Threatened, Endangered, or Candidate Animal Species; Migratory Birds, Utah BLM Sensitive Species
Ann Marie Aubry	Hydrologist	Air Quality, Water Quality, Floodplains, Soils, Riparian, Wetlands/Riparian
Katie Stevens	Recreation Planner	Areas of Critical Environmental Concern, Recreation, Wild & Scenic Rivers, Visual Resources
Aron King	Archaeologist	Cultural Resources, Native American Religious Concerns
David Williams	Range Conservationist	Threatened, Endangered or Candidate Plant Species
Bill Stevens	Recreation Planner	Wilderness/WSA/Wilderness Characteristic, BLM Natural Area, Socio-Economics, Environmental Justice
Jordan Davis	Range Conservationist	Range Health Standards & Guidelines, Livestock Grazing, Invasive, Non-Native Species;
Rebecca Doolittle	Geologist	Geology/Mineral Resources/Energy Protection, Paleontology, Hazardous Materials
Jan Denney	Lands	Lands/Access
Josh Relph	Fuels	Fuels/Fire Management

REFERENCES

- Smith, T. S., J. T. Flinders, and D. S. Winn. 1991. A habitat evaluation procedure for reintroducing Rocky Mountain bighorn sheep in the intermountain west. *The Great Basin Naturalist* 51:205-225.
- Van Dyke, Walter A.; Sands, Alan; Yoakum, Jim; [and others]. 1983. Wildlife habitats in managed rangelands--the Great Basin of southeastern Oregon: bighorn sheep. General Technical Report. PNW-159. Portland, OR: US Department of Agriculture, Forest Service, Pacific Northwest and Range Experiment Station. 37 p.

Finding of No Significant Impact

Environmental Assessment DOI-BLM-UT-Y010-2015-0222

Tusher Canyon Upland Game Guzzlers

Introduction

The Bureau of Land Management (BLM) has conducted an Environmental Analysis (EA) (DOI-BLM-UT-Y010-2015-0222) for a proposed installation of two water developments (guzzler) designed for upland game use on public lands. The underlying need for the proposal as detailed in the EA will be met while accomplishing the following objectives:

- Provide additional water source for upland game birds and other wildlife thus increasing the quality and availability of habitat.

The water developments will be located in Tusher Canyon on canyon bottom and up top of the canyon at the base of a mountain. Both sites are approximately 12 miles northeast of Green River, UT in T. 20 S. R. 17 E., sec 07, S½. and T. 20 S. R. 17 E., sec 10, N½. within areas that have good escape terrain. (EA Map - Project Location).

A No Action alternative was analyzed in the EA.

Due to the potential for cultural and/or paleontological resources to occur in the Moab FO, the following standard Condition of Approval will be placed on this project:

Any cultural and/or paleontological resource (historic or prehistoric site or object) discovered by the holder, or any person working on his behalf, on public or Federal land shall be immediately reported to the authorized officer. The holder shall suspend all operations in the immediate area of such discovery until a written authorization to proceed is issued by the authorized officer. An evaluation of the discovery will be made by the authorized officer to determine appropriate actions to prevent the loss of significant cultural or scientific values. The holder will be responsible for the cost of evaluation and any decision as to proper mitigation measures will be made by the authorized officer after consulting with the holder.

Finding of No Significant Impact Determination

Based on the analysis of potential environmental impacts contained in the referenced EA, and considering the significance criteria in 40 CFR 1508.27, I have determined that the Proposed Action for the installation of the Tusher Canyon Upland Game Guzzlers does not constitute a major Federal action and will not have significant effects on the human environment. An environmental impact statement is therefore not required and will not be prepared.

This determination is based on the analysis of the context and intensity of the environmental effects, including the following factors:


(1) Potential beneficial and adverse direct, indirect and cumulative environmental impacts discussed in the EA have been disclosed within the appropriate context and intensity. No significant effects on the human environment have been identified. There will be no adverse long-term or significant adverse direct, indirect or cumulative effects to air,

soils, watershed resources, wildlife resources or other components of the environment as a result of this action (see EA, Chapter 4 for a full discussion of potential beneficial and adverse effects).

- (2) No significant adverse effects to public health or safety have been identified that will result from this action.
- (3) No significant adverse effects to riparian areas, wetlands, or floodplains have been identified as these resources are not located in or near the project area.
- (4) No significant adverse effects to livestock grazing have been identified as these guzzlers will only benefit livestock.
- (5) The implementation of this decision is not highly controversial and there has been no information provided that objects to or challenges the determination of effects.
- (6) This action does not establish a precedent for future actions, nor does it represent a decision in principle about a future consideration.
- (7) Based on the discussion in Chapter 4 of the EA, past, present, and reasonably foreseeable actions that could have a cumulatively significant effect on the quality of the human environment on potentially affected lands within or adjacent to the project area are not found to be significant.
- (8) Based on the archaeological inventory of the project area and in compliance with Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act and the state protocol agreement between the Utah State Director of the BLM and the Utah State Historic Preservation Officer (SHPO), the project undertaking will have "no effect" on any listed or eligible historic or cultural resources as per 36 CFR 800.4 (A)-(c) as all sites determined to be eligible will be avoided or selectively hand-treated.



Authorized Officer



Date

DECISION RECORD

Environmental Assessment DOI-BLM-UT-Y010-2015-0222

Tusher Canyon Upland Game Guzzlers

Plan Conformance and Consistency

As required by 43 CFR 1610.5, the proposed action has been reviewed and found to be in conformance with the Moab Resource Management Plan, approved October 31st, 2008.

The proposed water development is one of the planned guzzlers. This purpose is supported by two decisions in the 2008 Moab Resource Management Plan;

Maintain, protect and enhance habitats to support natural wildlife diversity, reproductive capability, and a healthy, self-sustaining population of wildlife and fish species.

Decision

It is my decision to authorize the installation of two water developments (Tusher Canyon Upland Game Guzzlers) designed for upland game birds and other wildlife use on public lands administered by the BLM as described in the Proposed Action in the accompanying EA (DOI BLM UT Y010 2015 0222). A BLM right-of-way will be issued on both guzzler locations.

Rationale for the Decision

The decision to authorize the installation of the Tusher Upland Game Guzzlers has been made in consideration of the environmental impacts of the proposed action, as well as in consideration of the impacts from no action. The Proposed Action responds to the primary purpose and need identified in the environmental assessment. As detailed in the Moab Field Office Record of Decision and Approved Resource Management Plan, the improvement of wildlife habitat is a high priority for the Moab BLM.

Water is a limiting factor in arid and desert environments and natural waters in Tusher Canyon area have dried up from drought or other possibly human related causes. Guzzlers are used to mitigate for the loss of natural waters. The installation of these water developments would enhance habitat for upland game birds and other wildlife by providing consistent water where it is currently limited. Where access to water is a limiting factor these guzzlers can stabilize and increase the distribution and abundance of many species of wildlife.

Notification of the preparation of this environmental assessment was posted on the BLM e-planning on August 13, 2015. Because the BLM received no public interest in the project, it was determined that a public comment period was not warranted.

Conclusion

My conclusion is based on a review of the record that shows research of relevant scientific information, the mitigation of potential adverse effects, and a basis for developments demonstrating the BLM's ability to successfully meet project goals and objectives.

Protest/Appeal Language

This decision shall take effect immediately upon the date it is signed by the Authorized Officer and shall remain in effect while any appeal is pending unless the Interior Board of Land Appeals issues a stay (43 CFR 3165.4). Any appeal of this decision must follow the procedures set forth in 43 CFR Part 4. Within 30 days of the decision, a notice of appeal must be filed in the office of the Authorized Officer at:

Bureau of Land Management
Moab Field Office
82 E Dogwood Ave
Moab, UT 84532

If a statement of reasons for the appeal is not included with the notice, it must be filed with the Interior Board of Land Appeals, Office of Hearings and Appeals, U.S. Department of the Interior, 801 North Quincy St., Suite 300, Arlington, VA 22203 within 30 days after the notice of appeal is filed with the Authorized Officer.


If you wish to file a petition for stay pursuant to 43 CFR Part 4.21(b), the petition for stay should accompany your notice of appeal and shall show sufficient justification based on the following standards:

1. The relative harm to the parties if the stay is granted or denied,
2. The likelihood of the appellant's success on the merits,
3. The likelihood of irreparable harm to the appellant or resources if the stay is not granted, and
4. Whether the public interest favors granting the stay.

If a petition for stay is submitted with the notice of appeal, a copy of the notice of appeal and petition for stay must be served on each party named in the decision from which the appeal is taken, and with the IBLA at the same time it is filed with the Authorized Officer.

A copy of the notice of appeal, any statement of reasons and all pertinent documents must be served on each adverse party named in the decision from which the appeal is taken and on the Office of the Regional Solicitor, U.S. Department of the Interior, 6201 Federal Building, 125 South State Street, Salt Lake City, Utah 84138-1180, not later than 15 days after filing the document with the Authorized Officer and/or IBLA.


Authorized Officer (signature)


Date of signature